

Exhibit A

*AL QAEDA AND TERRORISM'S GLOBAL REACH Federal Document Clearing House
Congressional Testimony October 3, 2001, Wednesday*

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Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations

October 3, 2001

I am pleased to appear before this committee to provide my views on al-Qaeda, its structure and its objectives. It is important to note that Americans have a difficult time in understanding extremist organizations with a religious orientation like al-Qaeda. It is essential that the agencies of our government involved in law enforcement and intelligence become intimately familiar with the culture of religious zealots whether of foreign or domestic origin. We must understand the nature of the threat before we can successfully confront it. In America, we also have fundamentalists such as Christian Identity, and other religious extremists who kill or maim in the name of God. Comprehending the danger and the mind-set of these groups is a first step to deterring the violence executed by the Osama Bin Laden's of the world. Unless we know what drives these religious extremists, who are willing to kill themselves in the performance of their violent acts, we will see days like September 11, 2001, repeated, perhaps with even greater casualties.

It is worth studying the evolution of the al-Qaeda group. Bin Laden, who opposes the American influence in the Middle East, was outraged by the 1990 Persian Gulf War which saw American

and other western troops stationed in Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden considers the country, ruled by the Al-Saudd family, as the guardian of the Islamic holy places. King Abd'al aziz al-Sau'd, who founded the monarchy, had the support of the Wahabis, the fundamentalist Islamic sect. The al-Saudd monarchy derives its authority from the Wahabis, who allied with Abd'al aziz, in creating modern Saudi Arabia. In return, the monarchy serves to guarantee the sanctity of Mecca and Medina, the site and magnetic pole for pilgrimages by the world's Muslims. In Bin Laden's view, the Saudi monarchy betrayed that sacred pact by allowing Christian and Jewish soldiers to be stationed on the soil of this Islamic country which had been entrusted with a special protectorate mission for the holy places. Bin Laden's opposition to the monarch resulted in his expulsion from the Kingdom. Shortly after, Bin Laden used his personal fortune and continuing contributions from wealthy Islamic businessmen in Saudi and the Gulf to organize training camps in the Sudan for Islamic activists from every major Islamic country. These contributions, plus revenues from Islamic Charity fronts, such as the International Islamic Relief Organization, headed by Bin Laden's brother-in-law, as well as numerous other charitable fronts, continue to fuel his group today

The international cadres that comprise many of the networks associated with al-Qaeda, were trained by so-called "Arab- Afghans" with fighting experience from the SovietAfghan war, although many of these "mujahedin" did not reach Afghanistan until after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. The main mission for Bin Laden was to disperse trained fighters to their native lands to fight against the secular Arab regimes and replace them with religious governments based on the Sharia- Islamic rather than civil law. The targets were secular Muslim countries such as Egypt and Algeria, and Muslim dominated provinces such as Chechnya and Dagestan in Russia and in Bosnia and Kosovo. Antigovernment movements were also promoted in Libya and Tunisia as well. Indeed, Bin Laden's vision is to re-establish the "Islamic Caliphate" across every Muslim country, a religious restoration of the old Ottoman Empire, this time under the leadership of the Taliban leader, Mullah Omar. Usama sees the United States and its world influence as the principal obstacle to achieving his vision.

Bin Laden relocated his operations to Afghanistan following pressure on the Sudan exerted by Saudi Arabia and the U.S. The Taliban, a group of religious students from Pakistani schools, were successful in establishing control over Afghanistan with the active military support of Pakistan's military intelligence service, the Inter Services Directorate (ISI). Pakistan's concern was to promote ethnic Pashtun control over the country, which was being run by Afghans hostile to Pashtun rule and Pakistani influence. The Pashtuns, or Pathans in common western usage, designates several dozen separate tribes on both sides of the Afghan/Pakistani border. The Taliban, lacking a secular education, is almost medieval in its concept of governance. The Taliban rulers have mismanaged the country, but have been amenable to Pakistani political influence although not totally subservient to it. Pakistan has also used its position and support to the Taliban to establish within Afghanistan a series of training camps for Kashmiri terrorists. ISI

personnel are present, in mufti, to conduct the training. This arrangement allowed Pakistan "plausible denial" that it is promoting insurgency in Kashmir. Pakistan also provisioned the Taliban with weapons to fight the "Northern Alliance" which contests Taliban control over the country and had until recently about 7% of Afghan territory, mostly north of Kabul and in the Panshir. The Northern Alliance, while including some Pashtuns, has been commanded by Ahmad Shah Massud, an ethnic Tajik. About three weeks ago, Massud was assassinated by suicide bombers identified as part of Bin Laden's group.

The bonds between Mullah Omar, and Usama Bin Laden, are bonds of blood and Bin Laden has offered "bayat" to Mullah Omar, an offering of submission to his will and his leadership. Bin Laden recently declared Taliban-ruled Afghanistan as the "new Mecca" and Mullah Omar as the new caliph. It is therefore all but impossible for Mullah Omar to turn over Bin Laden to the U.S. for prosecution as the U.S. has demanded. The Taliban and Bin Laden's estimated 4,000 to 5,000 fighters are intertwined with the Taliban military and Mullah Omar considers Bin Laden as his right hand.

What is Al-Qaeda? The Arabic word means the "Base," or "foundation." Bin Laden does not refer to his international network as al-Qaeda. This word refers to his companion in arms at his headquarters in Southern Afghanistan. In his camps perhaps 10,000 Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Tunisian, Moroccan, Algerian, Egyptian and ethnic Chechens, Dagestanis, Kosovars and dozens of other nationalities have been trained.

Some of them are provided specialized intelligence training, some schooled in the arts of making improvised explosive devices, and others given instruction in the production and use of chemical weapons. Those not chosen for specialized tasks are given combat training and either sent back to their native countries to foment insurgency against their secular regimes or enlisted in his combat brigade that fights alongside the Taliban against the Northern opposition. For the past four years, Bin Laden's men have fought with the Taliban against Massud, and have suffered the losses of at least seven hundred to a thousand men in the fighting, including one of Bin Laden's own sons about seven months ago.

It is important to distinguish between the so-called "loose networks" of affiliated groups, and the tightly controlled inner circle of al-Qaeda that conceives and implements their strategic operations. The bombing of the USS Cole, for example, was a tightly controlled al-Qaeda operation that had some local support, drawn from the Islamic Army of Aden, a radical Islamic group in the Yemen set up by Bin Laden's brother-in-law and funded by Usama. The operation was apparently directed by Muhammad Atef, an Egyptian who serves as Bin Laden's Chief of Operations. It was Atef's daughter who married one of Bin Laden's sons last May, a marriage that also symbolized the merger of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad into al-Qaeda, and a new name for the inner circle: "Jihad al-Qaeda."

The Ahmad Ressam case, was an example of the use of affiliated groups by al-Qaeda to promote violence against America. This was the "millennium" plot frustrated when Ressam panicked at the Canadian/ US border while transporting materials for five bombs. Ressam, a member of an Algerian terrorist faction funded and supported by Bin Laden, was trained at an al-Qaeda camp in Afghanistan and given \$12,000 seed money. He was told to raise the rest of the monies needed through criminal activity in Canada, organize his cell, and choose targets in America to destroy. Ressam planned to plant bombs at Los Angeles International Airport, to kill as many people as possible. At the same time, a more centrally controlled and sensitive al-Qaeda operation was being implemented in the port of Aden, against the USS Sullivans, the sister ship of the Cole. The explosives laden boat sank in the harbor while being piloted by the two would-be suicide bombers. They swam back to shore, and went to ground, certain that their abortive operation would be discovered. It was not. About 8 months later, the same operation, using more sophisticated and lighter explosives, was carried out against the Cole. The devastating results are well known.

How does the al-Qaeda organization fund its worldwide network of cells and affiliated groups? Several businessmen in Saudi Arabia and in the Gulf contribute monies. Many of these contributions are given out of a sense of Islamic solidarity. But much of the money is paid as "protection" to avoid having the enterprises run by these men attacked. There is little doubt that a financial conduit to Bin Laden was handled through the National Commercial Bank, until the Saudi government finally arrested a number of persons and closed down the channel. It was evident that several wealthy Saudis were funneling contributions to Bin Laden through this mechanism. Now, it appears, that these wealthy individuals are siphoning off funds from their worldwide enterprises in creative and imaginative ways. For example, orders may be given to liquidate a stock portfolio in New York, and have those funds deposited in a Gulf, African or Hong Kong bank controlled by a Bin Laden associate. Other channels exist for the flow of monies to Bin Laden, through financial entities in the UAE and Qatar. Cash, carried to intermediaries, is also a source of funding. There are some female members of Bin Laden's own family who have been sending cash from Saudi Arabia to his "front" accounts in the Gulf.

I will stop my remarks here, and I am prepared to address any questions you may have.

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